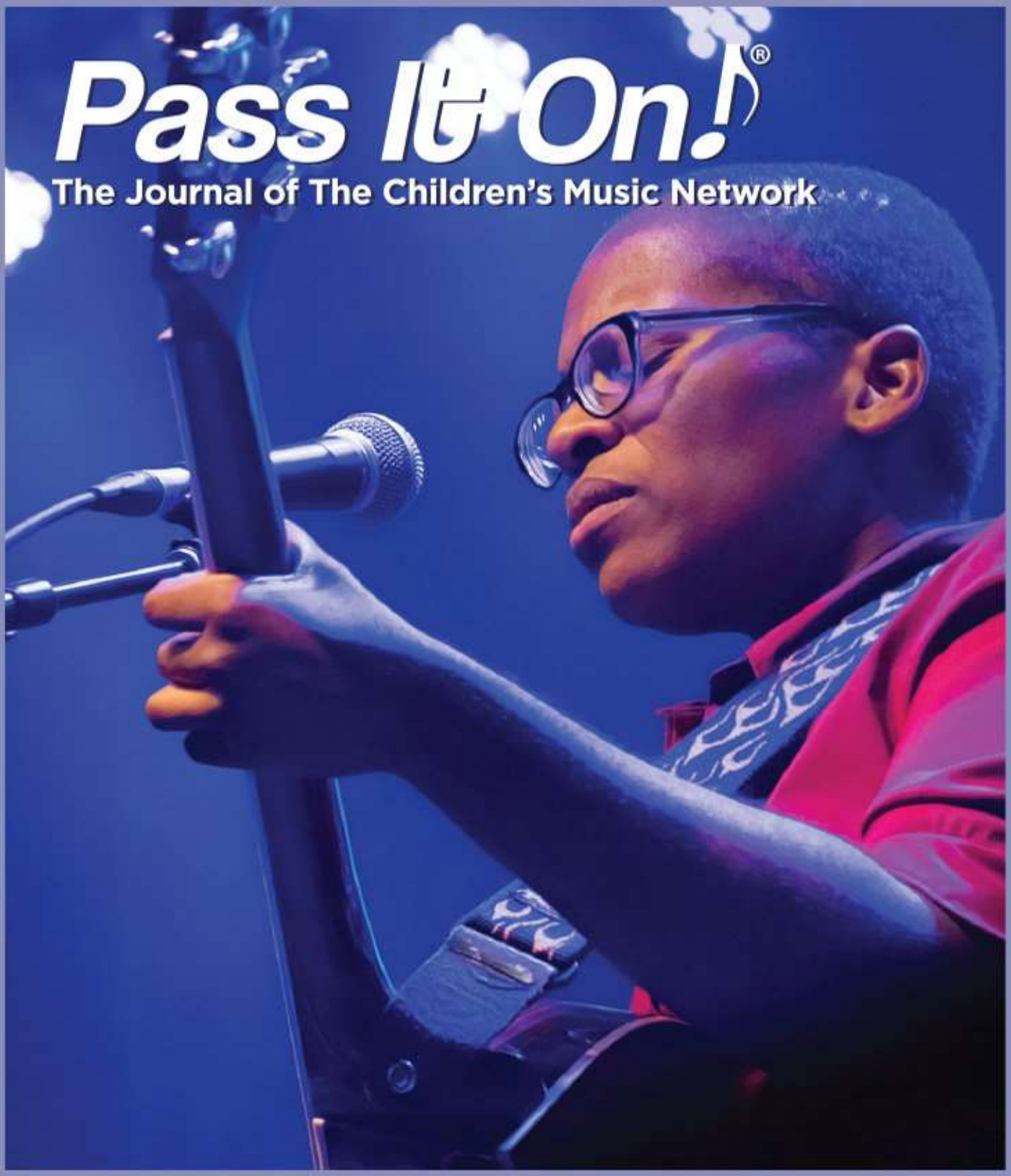
Pass It On!®

The Journal of The Children's Music Network



Fall 2020 | Issue #91

Everything's a Song

Fall 2020 | Issue #91

Everything's a Song

Everything's a Song: A Conversation With Lea Morris

Lea and I spoke via Zoom (how else?) about the ingenuity and creativity that arises in this time of restriction, about kids and their gifts, and the intertwining of music and spirituality. She was generous with her stories, insights, and humor, and it's my pleasure to pass them on. Page 3.

Radio Active Life

When I began producing my kids' music radio show, *Radio Active Kids*, four years ago, I had no idea quite what I was getting into. I knew that kids' music had made a positive impact on my life and that I wanted to share that positivity with others. Page 12.

Because of Fred Rogers

It still hurts to think about Fred Rogers. It's been seventeen years since his passing, and the thought of him still brings tears to my eyes. Page 14.

Look for the Helpers

"When children need helpers, I want them to hear Fred Rogers's gentle, sage advice. I remind them that they, too, can be helpers, even when they themselves need assistance." Page 16.

No Mirrors in My Nana's House

Dr. Barnwell's ability to cut to the core of emotions, ideas, and humanity shines throughout "No Mirrors in My Nana's House." We hope you will enjoy learning and sharing the love in her Nana's eyes. Page 19.

Little Bit of Light

Shalom and I fondly remember as kids singing on our mom's first children's album, *Might As Well Make It Love*, in 1981, at River City Studios in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It was fun and exciting, and we felt so professional at just twelve and thirteen years old. . . Page 24.

A Tribute to Carol Johnson

The Children's Music Network lost a longtime colleague and friend, Carol Johnson of Grand Rapids, Michigan, who died at the age of seventy-eight in November 2019 following a stroke. Page 27.

2020 Conference Preview

The 2020 Children's Music Network Annual Conference will be like no other. Page 30.

Everything's a Song: A Conversation With Lea Morris

by Ginger Lazarus[1]

For all the doors that the pandemic closes, it also opens the way to all manner of serendipity. In March, the Unitarian Universalist church I attend moved its services online, requiring worship leaders to get creative. Our music director shared a couple of videos made by Lea Morris, a singer/songwriter from the Washington, D.C., area—videos of Lea singing multi-part arrangements of her soulful, resonant melodies straight from her heart to the viewer's. It turns out she also does music with young folks and has connections to CMN; some of her Kid Pan Alley collaborations circulated among the membership this summer. I couldn't forget about Lea, and when I found out she is to participate in the 2020 CMN Annual (virtual) Conference, I knew had to learn and share more about her work.

Lea and I spoke via Zoom (how else?) about the ingenuity and creativity that arises in this time of restriction, about kids and their gifts, and the intertwining of music and spirituality. She was generous with her stories, insights, and humor, and it's my pleasure to pass them on.

Lea Morris

Ginger: I want to talk about the work you've been doing during the pandemic, but first let me ask: what were you doing *before* all this happened?

Lea: For the last twenty, twenty-five years I've identified as a singer-songwriter, playing acoustic guitar, and singing original songs and interpretations. I started about eight years ago to teach preschool music as well, interactive music experiences for kids. Then I started maybe five years ago to do music for spiritual gatherings: synagogues, churches—as long as their world view was similar enough to my own! That's pretty much the scope of what I was doing. Obviously, the physical performances and teaching were then immediately no longer available from one day to the next, which was really an interesting experience: to suddenly have to redefine what you do as an artist.

How did you get into working with kids?

Well, I have kids—

I've seen them in your videos!

Yeah. So I was already making music with children at home, but I hadn't really thought of it as something to do on a broader scale, until my mother-in-law mentioned it to me. And perhaps partly because of the source, I just kind of ignored the idea for three or four years. Then suddenly one day, I just thought, you know, my kids seem to enjoy this and I obviously enjoy making music with them—this could be something that's mutually beneficial for me and more kids, so why not pursue? And as soon as I made that mental shift that "I'm ready to do this", there were opportunities abounding.

What are some of the things you discovered working with kids after performing for adults?

Usually when I perform my original music, I close my eyes; that's just a habit I've developed over the years, and that is NOT available when you're playing with kids. There's none of this going into yourself stuff; you've got to be in the moment, you've got to be present with them. There's no checking your phone—nothing but that moment with them. And it's a really great lesson. It's a wonderful thing to practice.

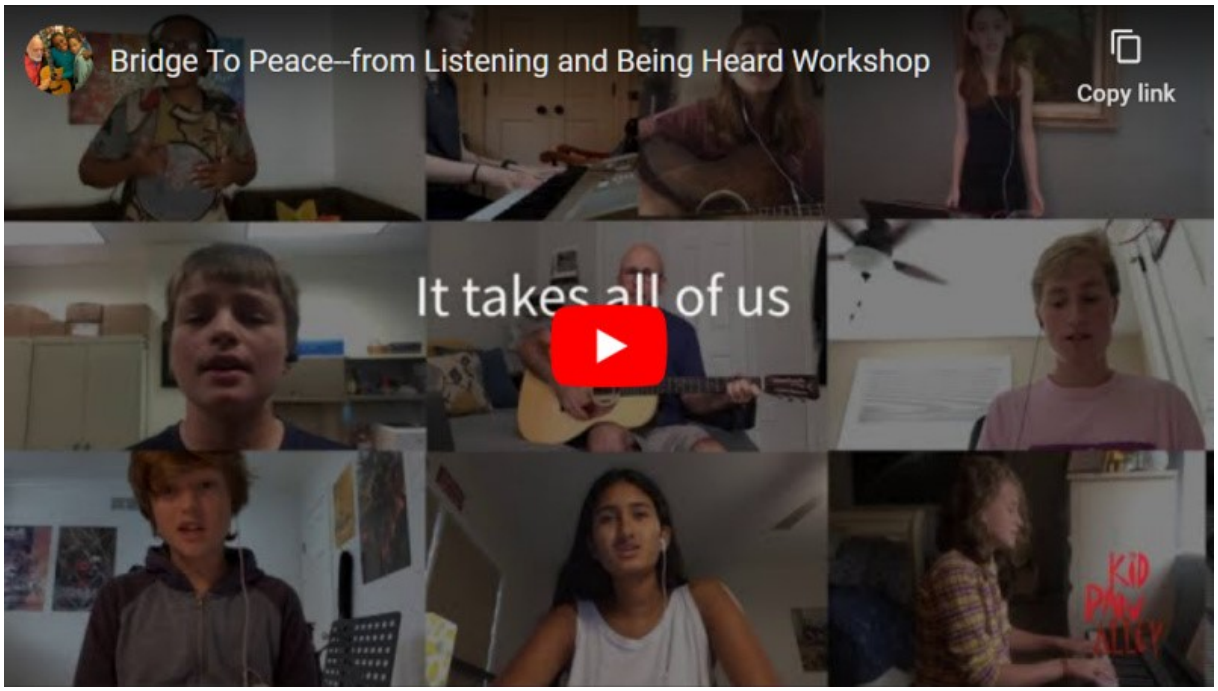
Did that then change the way you performed for adults?

Not really. I actually think this time—this whole COVID sharing experience—might do that, because likewise, when I'm performing for the camera, I don't close my eyes. I just feel like that's too much of a barrier. There's already enough between us that I need to be with whoever I'm sharing with. So that might change! I guess we'll see.

I know you've done some work with Kid Pan Alley[2]. Do you have any favorite experiences with them?

Recently we did a workshop for teens where we gathered with the group and discussed the current moment—socially, politically—and what we feel. And I should say it was really teen led; it was led by the students, and Robbie Schaefer and I facilitated the conversation and the songwriting process, but it was their thoughts and their ideas and ideals. Just thinking about where we are as a nation, and where we want to be, and what it's going to take to get there.

So they wrote a beautiful, beautiful song called "Bridge to Peace." That's the most recent experience that was meaningful to me. On one occasion, I walked out of a residency and just felt completely certain that with the influence of my parents and my love of kids and my love of music and the way I communicate that I was really born for the work. You know that feeling, where you're just like, "Ahh!" What is it that quote: "There are two important days, one is the day you were born and the other is when you figure out why." It was one of those moments.



"Bridge to Peace" from the Kid Pan Alley Listening and Being Heard Workshop

What was it about that experience that was so meaningful?

I think it was a culmination of so many things I had learned up till that point. I was just able to bring so much of myself into the moment and to share meaningfully with those kids and then receive what they were sharing. I feel like I was enhanced leaving the experience and knowing that they were as well. Pretty good stuff.

What inspires you in your songwriting?

Oh, everything. Everything's a song. My next-door neighbors have mint growing in a pot that's accessible from the sidewalk, and every time I walk that way, I grab just a little, you know, take a leaf. I just take the scent. And one morning the scent turned into a song. The songs are everywhere.

Mmm, mint! I love it.

Let's hear a little bit about your work with worship and spiritual communities. How did that come about?

I was raised in the Baptist tradition, so worship music is my foundational music. Using music or experiencing music to find and understand the divine as each of us defines it—that's who I am. I'm able now to take that outside of just one tradition and recognize that the divine is what each of us defines it to be, and it's *always* present in music. There's always something common and universal in music. That's my experience, and so everywhere the message resonates with how I see the world, I've been welcome and excited to be able to share.

Do you sing for people, or lead them in song or teach them songs, or both?

Definitely both. Even when I'm doing regular concerts for general audiences, I incorporate a lot of opportunity to sing along. At some point a few years ago, I realized I don't just want to sing at people; I want to have musical experiences that also invite them to be part of the music.

And your songs seem perfect for that.

Thank you!

I was really struck, watching your videos, by you taking these multiple shots of yourself and blending them together. It was beautifully done. Could you talk a little bit about how you started doing that?

Yeah, it's so hilarious. I mean, probably you won't laugh, but it's funny the way it came about. It was pretty much the same time that I came to terms with the fact that I wasn't going to be giving concerts and teaching and all these other things—I had this whole outline of what the year was going to look like and probably everybody did—and so I had my grieving process over that. I tend to take a walk every morning, and one of the mornings shortly thereafter I started singing something and hearing different harmonies and ideas for it, which is not usually how I had performed up to that point. I did a lot of a cappella harmonies when I was a kid but hadn't done that in decades. And it was just there, and I had GarageBand on my phone, so I just recorded all the layers. When I got home I thought, "Okay well, I can't do my concerts, but maybe I can present this somehow." I had to figure out the tech of how to do that, and that took a couple of days but once I did it I was like, "Oh, okay. So this is what I'm doing right now. Cool!"

Were you adept with the technology already or was it a learning experience?

It was totally a learning experience. In January of this year, I decided I would do a webcast, which required me to learn Adobe Premiere Pro. So I had the software and I had opened it and I had played with it, but I hadn't done anything like this with it before. For me it was just this huge "Aha! You can still share, you can still create, you're not shut in. You're fine; just go forward and do your thing."

What was the first one you did?

I think it was "Heart Wide Open." I did it in my backyard, and I asked my four-year-old to give me ten minutes, and she was like, "Sure, Mommy, I can play in the sandbox!" And then she jumped on my back in the final take. And I was like, I could either put her back in the sandbox or keep it, and I decided to keep it because for me it was part of the lesson: this is my reality now. It's all good.

"Heart Wide Open"

How did that spread around? It seems to have taken on a life of its own, since it's showing up in worship services here in Massachusetts!

I put it on YouTube—that was it, initially. Then, a friend of mine who is affiliated with UU music asked if I would make that and other recordings available to folks, and I said "Of course! That's why it's here." And then that just opened up relationships. There are quite a few congregations who are sending donations; there are those who have inspired me to start a song archive so that they can download rather than stream; and I'm sure there are groups that are just using it, pro bono, and it's all good! It's all good. I consider myself prosperous in many ways.

Have any interesting connections or collaborations popped up from that?

I've got a new friend in New Zealand, which is fun. And that whole thing of doing Zoom song circles is really weird and new and wonderful, too. There are these communities—they're not really choirs, because the idea is not to perfect music for performance purposes so much as the togetherness and the connection. So now they're doing that on Zoom, and it's new to me, new and really delightful, even though Zoom is not the same as being in person. It's still this ongoing connection.

I did see one of your videos with the big group of people singing. How did you find them? Was it an established song circle?

For that specific video, I sent out kind of an APB on my Facebook and a couple of friends who are song leaders forwarded it to their email lists. Whoever responded had to do a little work—they had to record themselves—but once they sent me the videos I was able to put them together in the software.

So now you're an expert at this…

More and more. I've started taking some online tutorials. It's a lot of fun, and you know, the subject is bottomless.

. . . and I believe, teaching it?

(chuckles) Yeah, that too. You know why? I've gotten so many emails: "How do you do that?" And I figure, rather than trying to tell everyone individually, I made a tutorial and put that on YouTube within the first month. If a person would like to, and has the software and a bit of savvy, they could definitely figure out how to do it, but I also understand that for some folks it's more comfortable to have an organized class and someone you can ask questions. I can definitely tell you what I know!

You made the wonderful "Wake Up in America" video with 123 Andrés, who has done a lot with CMN, and the song was co-written by member Dave Kinnoin. I was wondering how that came about.

So that is one of my favorite songs in the universe. Andrés gave me the Grin Brigade CD of Dave's a few years ago, and I was listening to it with my kids, and when that song came on I just burst into tears, it moved me so deeply. So I learned it and I started playing it everywhere; every chance I got, I played it. In the aftermath of George Floyd's death, there were some songs and some messages that were being shared, and that was the one that resonated with me. That is what I wanted to sing. And I felt that it would be most meaningful if it wasn't just me singing it, if I could find kind of a Rainbow Coalition of Americans to play and sing it with me. So those guys stepped up.

"Wake Up in America"

Has George Floyd's death and the protests and the national conversation about it had any other influence on your work?

I think as an artist, if you're at all aware of what's going on, then it's going to influence you. Unless you're under a rock, everything's going to influence you. I have been very intentional, and will continue to be intentional, about creating songs that are . . . beautiful—that feel beautiful and that feel joyful and that feel empowering. That's just my choice. I feel like anything anybody feels led to sing in response, or say in response, to this time, whether it's the pandemic or the changing of the nation, or the political situation, whatever it is, it's all valid. What I feel called to sing are those songs, those messages.

How do you practice self-care?

I feel really fortunate to have a practice that existed before this time, so it's not like scrambling and "Aaaaahh! Everything's weird! Now what?!" It's more about being consistent, and the practice is—there is a meditation aspect and introspection and all sorts of things, but it's ongoing. One of the reasons I admire practitioners of Islam so much is that they see it as a way of life—it's not just something I do on Sunday, this is who I am. I definitely see my spiritual—and that's probably too esoteric a word for it—my practice as who I am. And I don't want to be disparaging to anyone else. In the tradition I was raised in, there was the Sunday service, and then we were there, like, four times a week, and there was Bible study, and there were a lot of other things. But there was a lot of duality about it; let's put it that way. So I learned from that that is not how I choose to practice.

With your own kids at home and maybe with the kids you've worked with during this time, have you found resources for reaching kids in what is a really tough time for everybody?

You know, I've always wanted to home school and I've been fascinated by unschooling, so it was an opportunity to kind of do that. How amazing is it that I can literally find a German teacher online, my son can look at anything he wants to know about history, or we can take drawing tutorials—whatever it is, if you're interested, the information's available. It's just remarkable.

Anything else you want to say about music and kids?

This morning, Jacob [age 11] and I were watching Lucy [age 4] play: she jumped into a laundry hamper, decided it was a boat, and started rowing across the living room. It's probably true that she's even more creative now than when we had so much to do and we had so many places to go. And so, while this time is challenging and it's weird and it's new and different, it also does offer us possibilities for creativity and imagination. Especially people who work with kids, keep that in mind. Keeping that alive and staying fresh and in the moment is still available, maybe even more available than when we were in such a rush to get to all of our teaching gigs!

Also, I'm planning on creating a children's songbook. I just put a general songbook out and now got all these kids' songs. I know what the process is so I'm going to do that!

Wonderful. Good luck with that, and with everything you're doing. Looking forward to seeing you virtually in October!

Yes indeed, if not before. Thank you!

---

1. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/authors/ginger-lazarus.aspx
2. https://www.kidpanalley.org
3. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WScdN5y5T4k
4. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5LJ11HGuz0
5. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srtMIJBigrI

Sagan Thacker

Radio Active Life

by Sagan Thacker[1]

The Pass It On! *Scholars Award is given each fall to a high school senior, university, or college student. Our* PIO! *Scholars reviewers select the candidate most likely, throughout their lifetime, to continue celebrating the positive power of music in the lives of children and to recognize the importance of networking and sharing knowledge, music, ideas, and songs.*

Sagan Thacker, author of this year's winning essay, recently graduated with a bachelor's in history from the University of North Carolina at Asheville, and is host and producer of Radio Active Kids*, a music radio show for children.*

When I began producing my kids' music radio show, *Radio Active Kids*, four years ago, I had no idea quite what I was getting into. I knew that kids' music had made a positive impact on my life and that I wanted to share that positivity with others. Once I started interacting with artists and fans in the *kindie* world, I saw how much deeper and essential the community I had entered really is, and I quickly realized what I could do with the platform I had been given.

On *Radio Active Kids* today, I make it my mission to publicize as many intelligent, thoughtful kids' musicians as possible and to foster as much of a global kindie community as I can. I have sought out and played active, independent kids' musicians from at least twenty-seven countries (and counting!), using my show to connect my

listeners with an unmatched variety of sounds, textures, and cultures. I believe that by doing this, I can make the world of all my listeners—kids and adults alike—a little bigger in size and scope.

In addition, the interactions that I have had with my listeners affirm that my hard work does make a positive impact on their lives. It is a truly wonderful feeling when, for example, I receive a message from a dad requesting a song for his husband and their daughter by a family band of Sri Lankan immigrants to Australia ("Jamerah and her Dads" by the Cuddly Koalas). This is exactly the kind of familial, cross-cultural, and inclusive connection that I want to create, and it delights me that I can do it through kids' music and support the community of which I so enjoy being a part.

As I move into the next phase of my life—attending graduate school to become a librarian—I see no end in sight for my radio show or the work I put into it. I won't stop. I can't stop—the community that I have upheld and the difference I have made to listeners and artists are far too important to me and the music to abandon them now. I am sure that I and the show will continue to change and evolve with time. Furthermore, as someone who is recently out as nonbinary, I recognize the vital importance of queer representation in the kids' music world, and I am proudly out to all my listeners and friends.

In short, I have found the way that I can be imaginative and mutually beneficial in today's world. Through sharing a multitude of quality kids' music—and by simply being there and encouraging creative relationships worldwide—I can make the world brighter and wider for kids and anyone else who happens to tune in and expand their mind. That is something of which I can truly be proud, and I look forward to continuing to share the world of kids' music with the rest of the world as long as I possibly can.

Many thanks to the members of the PIO! *Scholars selection committee: Alice Burba, Susan Picking, Katherine Dines, Susan Salidor, and Jane Arsham.*

And a big congratulations to our three runners-up: Alexandra Alberta, Madison Hughes, and Zachary Shand!

Alexandra Alberta

Madison Hughes

Zachary Shand

---

1. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/authors/sagan-thacker.aspx

Because of Fred Rogers

by Cynthia Dougherty[1]

It still hurts to think about Fred Rogers. It's been seventeen years since his passing, and the thought of him still brings tears to my eyes. Thirty seconds into the Tom Hanks movie, *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*, I was a puddle. I remember my husband looked over at me as I was openly sobbing in a public theater and asked, "Are you going to be okay?" And as I sit here writing now, if my husband were to pop out to the deck and see the state I'm in, I'm sure he'd ask the same question.

It's a really good question. I've been pondering that very same question for quite some time these days . . .

Are we going to be okay?

When I was a child, Mr. Rogers was a quiet, calming presence. He spoke so simply and he spoke directly to me. Even as I got older and was deemed by my older brother "too old" to watch Mr. Rogers, I still found myself drawn to him. I was too young to be able to pinpoint why that was. Even as I write this right now, I struggle to find the words to say how I feel.

Maybe that's just it . . .

I feel.

Because of Fred Rogers, I learned it was okay to feel.

It's okay to feel happy.
It's okay to feel sad.
It's okay to feel scared.
It's okay to feel mad.
It's okay to feel shame.
It's okay to feel proud.
It's okay to feel quiet.
It's okay to feel loud.
It's okay to feel exactly how you're feeling today.
It's okay to feel feelings.
You're going to be okay.

Thank you, Fred, my Everywhere Friend. You taught me all I ever really needed to know.

Fred Rogers is the 2020 recipient of the Magic Penny Award. For more on his work and legacy, see Phil Hoose's interview with Rogers, "The Gift of Your Honest Self,"[2] originally published in Issue #19/20, Summer 1995, and reprinted in Issue #83, Spring 2017.

---

1. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/authors/cynthia-dougherty.aspx
2. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/features/an-interview-with-fred-rogers.aspx

Look for the Helpers

words and music by Dave Kinnoin[1]
©2019 Song Wizard Music (ASCAP)

Whom do you turn to when you need a song on a special topic? We often look to the Song Wizard[2], Dave Kinnoin, a longtime Children's Music Network member and an amazingly prolific songwriter.

The Children's Music Network is presenting the 2020 Magic Penny Award posthumously to Fred Rogers. So, of course, we want to celebrate songs by and about him. Dave Kinnoin wrote "Look for the Helpers" with Mr. Rogers in mind and explains that, "When children need helpers, I want them to hear Fred Rogers's gentle, sage advice. I remind them that they, too, can be helpers, even when they themselves need assistance. This song sparks discussions about feelings such as fright, sadness, loneliness, and disappointment, and also the gladness and satisfaction one gets by receiving help and being a good listener and helper."

---

1. http://www.songwizard.com
2. http://www.songwizard.com

Look for the Helpers

words and music by Dave Kinnoin
©2019 Song Wizard Music (ASCAP)

INTRO: F F B♭ C

Verse

F B♭ C F F/E

1. I know you get scared some-times. Some-times you get sad.
2. If you see an-oth-er kid who needs some-one too,

F/D F/C Gm7 C F

Some-times you get lone-ly for what you wish you had.
and there's no one else a-round, that some-one could be you.

F7 B♭ B♭m F F/E

Some-times it seems like noth-in' is go-in' as it should.
Some-times just lis-ten-ing can be the best gift you can give.

F/D F/C B♭ B♭ C

Some hope can still shine through. There's some-thing you can do.
To-geth-er hearts grow strong re-mem-ber-ing this song.

C7 𝄋 **Chorus** F F7 B♭

Look for the help-ers, The ones who help you when you

Gm7 C F F7 B♭

need them to. When you have a prob-lem, they al-ways care.

https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/look-for-the-helpers

The Children's Music Network

Last time To Coda
B♭m F F/E Gm7 C F 1.
Look for the help - ers, and pret - ty soon they'll be there.
Bridge
2.
Dm G Dm7 Gm7 C C
rit.
D.S. al Coda
(to CHORUS)
there. There's al - ways some - one Who wants you to feel bet - ter.
Dm Dm/C G/B Gm7 C F F/E
there. Look for the help - ers pret - ty soon they'll be there.
F/D F/C F F/E F/D F/C B♭ Gm7 C F
Look for the help - ers pret - ty soon they'll be there. Look for the help - ers.

Verse:
I know you get scared sometimes.
Sometimes you get sad.
Sometimes you get lonely for
What you wish you had.
Sometimes it seems like
Nothin' is goin' as it should.
Some hope can still shine through.
There's something you can do.

Chorus
Look for the helpers,
The ones who help you
When you need them to.
When you have a problem,
They always care.
Look for the helpers,
And pretty soon they'll be there.

If you see another kid
Who needs someone too,
And there's no one else around,
That someone could be you.
Sometimes just listening
Can be the best gift you can give.
Together hearts grow strong
Remembering this song.

Chorus

Bridge:
There's always someone
Who wants you to feel better.

Chorus

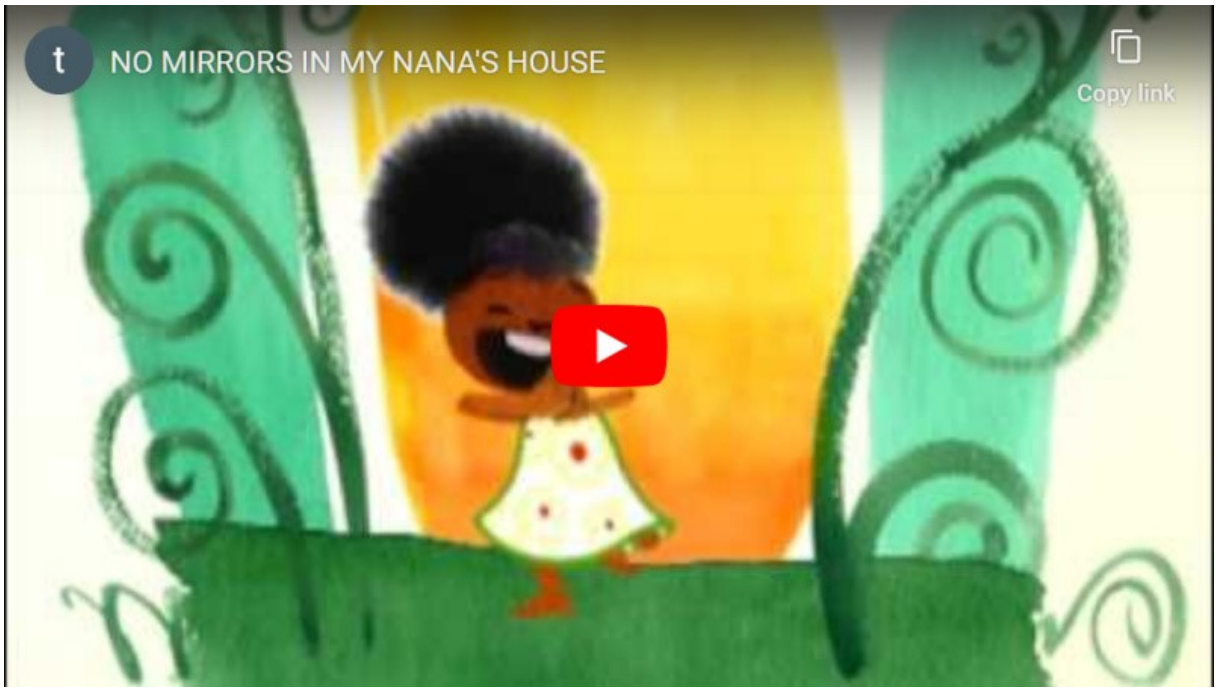
No Mirrors in My Nana's House

words and music by Ysaÿe M. Barnwell[1]
©1992 Ysaÿe M. Barnwell

Dr. Ysaÿe M. Barnwell, our Keynoter Speaker at the 2020 International Children's Music Network Conference, is mostly known for her work with Sweet Honey in the Rock,® which she joined in 1979. But her career and contributions to the world of music extend far beyond even that notable achievement. Please take time to savor Dr. Barnwell's biography[2], which states in part:

"Dr. Barnwell has been a commissioned composer on numerous choral, film, video, dance, and theatrical projects including *Sesame Street*, Dance Alloy of Pittsburgh, David Rousseve's Reality Dance Company, The New Spirituals Project, GALA Festival Choruses, MUSE: Cincinnati's Women's Chorus, The Steel Festival: Art of an Industry (Bethlehem, PA), [and] The King's Singers in England. In 1996 she was awarded the Bessie Award for her score 'Safe House: Still Looking,' commissioned by Liz Lerman Dance Exchange. The year 2001 saw the premiere of the work 'Suite Death,' a setting of four poems by Langston Hughes for baritone, choir, and orchestra, commissioned by the Plymouth Music Series in Minneapolis, Minnesota. In February 2003, the Choral Arts Society of Washington, D.C., premiered 'Truth Pressed to Earth Shall Rise,' a choral work in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr."

Dr. Barnwell's ability to cut to the core of emotions, ideas, and humanity shine throughout the song we chose to highlight, "No Mirrors in My Nana's House." We hope you will enjoy learning and sharing the love in her Nana's eyes.



Video: No Mirrors in My Nana’s House

---

1. https://www.ymbarnwell.com
2. https://www.ymbarnwell.com/bio-1
3. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GD57KULeIgg

No Mirrors in My Nana's House

words and music by Ysaÿe M. Barnwell
©1992 Ysaÿe M. Barnwell

Chorus

C F C F F C
There were no mir - rors in my Na - na's house, no mir - rors in my Na - na's house.

C D7 F C D7 F
There were no mir - rors in my Na - na's house, no mir - rors in my Na - na's

1. C F G
house. And the beau-ty that I saw in ev-er-y thing, the beau-ty in ev-er-y thing,

C F C
oh, was in her eyes! Oh, was in her eyes.

F 2. C F **Verse**
I'm tel-ling you that house. I nev-er knew that my skin was too bl-ack, And

I nev-er knew that my nose was too fl-at. And I nev-er knew that my

clothes did - n't - fit. And I nev - er knew there were things that I missed 'cuz the
G7
beau - ty that I saw in ev - er - y thing, the beau - ty in ev - er - y thing, was in her
F
3.
C
F
Verse
eyes. Oh, house. The world out - side was a
ma - gi - cal pl - ace. I on - ly knew love and I did - n't know hate. And the
G7
beau - ty that I saw in ev - er - y thing, the beau - ty in ev - er - y thing, was in her
C
F
C
F
eyes, (Like the ris - ing of the sun) was in her eyes. (Like the ris - ing of the sun.)
C7
Repeat and Fade
Chil', look deep in - to my eyes. Chil', look deep in - to my eyes.

Chorus:
There were no mirrors in my Nana's house,
No mirrors in my Nana's house.
There were no mirrors in my Nana's house,
No mirrors in my Nana's house.
And the beauty that I saw in everything
The beauty in everything,
Oh, was in her eyes. Oh, was in her eyes.

Verse
I never knew that my skin was too black,
And I never knew that my nose was too flat.
And I never knew that my clothes didn't fit.
And I never knew there were things that I'd missed,
The beauty in everything,
Oh, was in her eyes. Oh, was in her eyes.

Chorus

The world outside was a magical place.
I only knew love and I didn't know hate.
And the beauty that I saw in everything,
The beauty in everything
Was in her eyes.
Like the rising of the sun.
Was in her eyes.
Like the rising of the sun.

Coda:
Chil', look deep into my eyes.
Chil', look deep into my eyes.
Repeat and fade

Little Bit of Light

words and music by Carol Johnson[1]
© Noeldner Music (BMI), Grand Rapids, MI 49505

Carol Johnson's passing was a great loss to the children's music world in general, and to the Children's Music Network in particular. Carol shared her talent, wisdom, and love with everyone she met.

Her daughter, Shalom, and son, Luke, reminisced about working with their mom:

"Shalom and I fondly remember as kids singing on our mom's first children's album, *Might As Well Make It Love,* in 1981, at River City Studios in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It was fun and exciting, and we felt so professional at just twelve and thirteen years old, to be in the sound booth with a couple neighborhood friends and a wonderful studio band, circled around professional mics and mixing boards. I distinctly remember Mom instructing us kids that we had to stand upright to keep our lungs open, 'no slouching,' and to *always* smile while we sang, 'because you can hear that on the album.' We're still smiling, Mom!"

Please see the tribute to Carol Johnson[2] in this issue for more remembrances.

---

1. http://caroljohnsonmusic.com
2. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/a-tribute-to-carol-johnson

Little Bit of Light

words and music by Carol Johnson

© Noeldner Music (BMI), Grand Rapids, MI 49505

E7 A Bm

1. I've got some of the light in me. You've got
2. some of the truth in me. You've got
3. some of the love in me. You've got

E7 A D A

some of the light in you. And a lit - tle bit of light from ev-'ry one is e -
some of the truth in you. And a li - tle bit of truth from ev-'ry one, A (add light)
some of the love in you. And a li - tle bit of love from ev-'ry one. A (add truth)

1, 2, 3. Bm E 4. Bm E7 A **Fine**

nough to see us through. I've got nough to see us through.

D E A E/G♯ F♯m A/E Bm

There is no - bo - y with a han-dle on it all. No one place the

E7 A D E A E/G♯

an-swers can be found. But ev-'ry bod-y has a gift, and ev-'ry one can

F♯m A/E Bm D Bm E7 **D.S. al Fine**

share. Put them all to - geth-er, we can turn this world a-round. 1. I've got

I've got some of the light in me.
You've got some of the light in you.
And a little bit of light from everyone,
Is enough to see us through.

I've got some of the truth in me.
You've got some of the truth in you.
And a little bit of truth from everyone,
A little bit of light from everyone,
Is enough to see us through.

I've got some of the love in me.
You've got some of the love in you.
And a little bit of love from everyone,
A little bit of truth from everyone,
A little bit of light from everyone,
Is enough to see us through.

Bridge:
There is nobody with a handle on it all.
No one place the answers can be found.
But everybody has a gift
and everyone can share,
Put them all together we can
turn this world around.

Repeat Verses 1, 2, and 3

A Tribute to Carol Johnson

compiled by Margaret Hooton

The Children's Music Network lost a long-time colleague and friend, Carol Johnson of Grand Rapids, Michigan, who died at the age of seventy-eight in November 2019 following a stroke.

Carol Annette Noeldner was born in 1941 on a family dairy farm in rural Wisconsin. As a schoolgirl, Carol taught herself to play guitar, piano, and coronet, and became a young organist at the family church. She evolved into a singer-songwriter and performed as one of the five Noeldner Sisters.

Carol graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a degree in music and married fellow UW grad Barry Johnson. In the late 1960s, Carol gave birth to her son, Luke, and daughter, Shalom. In the 1970s, she recorded her first folk album, *Family Reunion*, and performed her music at clubs, concerts, and music festivals. She had a tremendous gift for poetically simple lyrics of love, peace, nature, and faith. One of her earliest playful songs, "Love Grows One By One[1]," was written as a wedding gift for two dear friends. "Love Grows" resonated joyously with everyone who heard it—especially young families and children. It became Carol's signature song and launched her into children's music.

CD: Might as Well Make It Love

In 1981, Carol collected "Love Grows" with thirteen other original children's songs into her delightful second LP, *Might As Well Make It Love*, on which Luke and Shalom both sing. Families, schools, festivals, churches, and the children's music industry praised her

creativity and message. *Might As Well Make It Love* went on to win a Parents' Choice Award. Over the next three years, Carol wrote and produced two more celebrated albums, *Isn't It Good To Know* (1982) and *Fine Weather* (1984), and eventually built her extraordinary *Music With a Message* performance program around her three children's albums. She attended CMN conferences where she shared her songs, her love of children, and her ready smile.

CD: Fine Weather

Carol's family has graciously provided a free link to all the tracks of her albums on Soundcloud: bit.ly/listen-to-carols-music[2]. Her CDs and songbooks are available for sale on her website: bit.ly/purchase-carols-music[3]. Read more about Carol Johnson on her website: caroljohnsonmusic.com[4] or at https://www.memorialalternatives.com/notices/Carol-Johnson[5]

Carol Johnson: Remembrances

Carol and I met through CMN, both being in the Midwest Region. Though we'd met face to face briefly at a CMN conference, our relationship got started when I asked her for a mechanical license for "Love Grows One By One." I began to get emails and notes from her. Out of the blue, Carol sent another song that she thought I would like, and "Shine, Shine, Shine" became the second of her songs I recorded. She was so pleased with the responses to her song that I relayed to her regularly, such as a school that made it their annual theme. I sent her the school t-shirt with the title emblazoned on it. About ten years ago, Carol sent two cassettes of never-recorded songs she'd written. In her lovely voice with just her light touch on her guitar she sang to me with a smile in her voice. I know where this lyric in "Shine, Shine, Shine" comes from: "I've got a great big light, deep inside."

Carol always got in touch (sometimes with a delightful phone call) when I sent out regional news. I considered her a friend, and her voice is missed.

—Carole Stephens

I first met Carol Johnson in the summer of 1993. I was at the Midwest People's Music Network annual conference at Masthouse, a wonderful, vibrant fixture of the music scene in Woodstock, Illinois. Several of us drove north into Wisconsin that Sunday morning to rendezvous for a Midwest CMN gathering. Carol drove down from Michigan to join us. I was struck by her warm and loving energy as well as by the wonderful songs she shared. I learned "Love Grows One By One" and started singing it in my children's music classes immediately. I'd sing the chorus as a closing song at the end of each toddler and preschool class, teaching the children to sing and sign: "Love grows one by one, two by two, four by four. Love grows round like a circle and comes back knocking at your front door." A song that sums up Carol in a nutshell—a simple beautiful melody with words straight from the heart.

I didn't see Carol often, only periodically at CMN gatherings. I worked with her to include songs from her *Circle of Peace* album in the original Peace Resources Pages for CMN, and years later we collaborated again to add them to the Peace Songbook in the CMN Song Library. She was always so generous, enthusiastic, and supportive.

The story about Carol I love the most came when she told me that she loved to hike. One time she was hiking in the mountains and when she got to the mountaintop, she sang "Love Grows One By One" at the top of her lungs, sending it out to fly into the world in all directions. And that is exactly what it did.

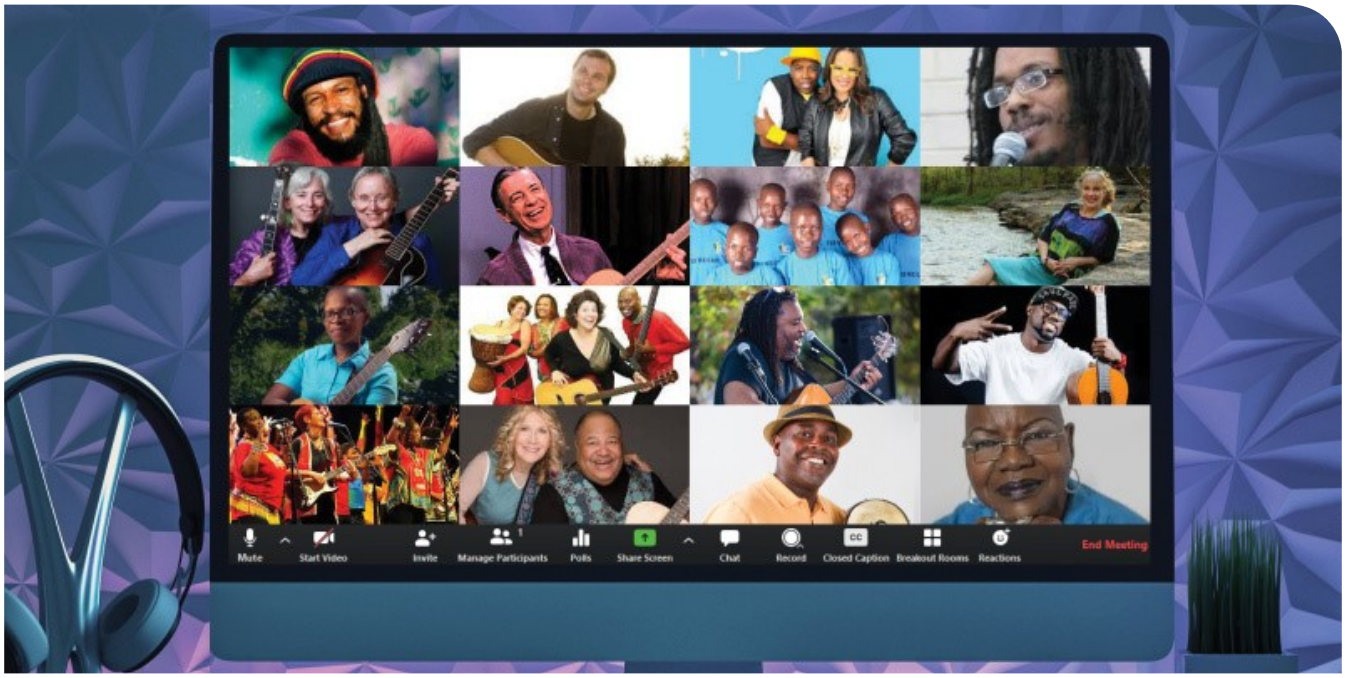
Carol is the kind of songwriter whose songs are real gifts. They are gentle treasures, there for the deeper moments that we find ourselves in. For me, this is especially true of her song, "Peaceful." Carol sang it to me at a Midwest CMN gathering when we were hanging out between workshops. She said she had either written it, collected it, or evolved it, she wasn't even quite sure anymore, but it was one she often sang. It has a slow and beautiful melody and simple motions. This became a song I'd often sing to help calm things down in a class, as a closing song in a program, as a song in profound family moments. I've always recognized that songs can be vessels, to shape and hold and spill over any way the spirit moves, and this song does that and so much more.

> All above me peaceful
> All below me peaceful
> All before me peaceful
> All behind me peaceful
> All around me peaceful
> All within me peaceful

—Barb Tilsen

---

1. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/songs/love-grows-one-by-one.aspx
2. http://bit.ly/listen-to-carols-music
3. http://bit.ly/purchase-carols-music
4. http://caroljohnsonmusic.com
5. https://www.memorialalternatives.com/notices/Carol-Johnson



2020 Conference Preview

by David Heitler-Klevans

The **2020 Children's Music Network Annual Conference** will be like no other. Born of adversity and opportunity, the 2020 Conference will be entirely virtual, via Zoom. Although we will miss being together in person to sing and talk and hug, there are many benefits to the virtual conference format. We are particularly excited that technology will make the conference accessible to people who otherwise would not be able to attend because of geography, finances, or health. Participants will also be able to attend every workshop if they desire, since the workshops are all scheduled at different times (and we will record them so they can be viewed later as well).

The theme of the 2020 Conference is **Music Makes the World Go 'Round**, and we are highlighting the connections between music and activism. Our opening on Friday, October 2, will feature hip-hop artist **Bomani Armah** (aka D'mite, aka Baba Bomani)[1] and **Alastair Moock**[2] performing his song "Be a Pain." Saturday, October 3, will begin with a second welcome featuring South African musician and activist **Sharon Katz**[3], whose internationally recognized **Peace Train** brought people of all races together in her home country and continues to do so in the United States, Cuba, and Mexico. **Devin Walker**[4] will introduce the inspiring **Dr. Ysaÿe Maria Barnwell**[5], master teacher, choral clinician, composer, and longtime member of Sweet Honey in the Rock, who will present the keynote address about **music in the Civil Rights Movement and the African American community**, followed by a workshop on **Building a Vocal Community®: Singing in the African American Tradition**. There will be three consecutive song swaps on Sunday afternoon, October 4, giving participants opportunities to share their songs about Social Justice, Reading and Books, and the Environment. On Sunday evening, October 4, there will be a facilitated

discussion on race and being an anti-racist.

Bomani Armah

Alastair Moock

Sharon Katz

Devin Walker

Ysaÿe Barnwell

On Monday evening, October 5, **Wendy Morgan**[6] will lead **Be the Change**, a panel discussion including **Stephen Wandu Bimo (I CAN South Sudan)**[7], **Darryl Boggs**, **Marsha Goodman-Wood**[8], **Kaitlin McGaw and Tommy Shepherd (the Alphabet Rockers)**[9], **SaulPaul**[10], and **Devin Walker**[11]. On Tuesday, October 6, **Richard McLaughlin**[12] will present a workshop on **Music, Puppets, and the Environment**, and **Joyce Rouse**[13] will present **Suffrage Songs: Music to March, Persuade, and Rally**. Workshops on inclusivity and accessibility include **David Meyers'**[14] **Accessible Music: Creating Songs for Children With Autism** and **Joanie Calem's**[15] **There Is Room for All of Us: Sensory Friendly Songs and Games**. These are just a sampling of the many wonderful sessions scheduled by Workshop Coordinators **Kathy Byers**[16] and **Sally Rogers**[17].

Wendy Morgan

I CAN South Sudan

Marsha Goodman-Wood

Alphabet Rockers

Saul Paul

Devin Walker

Joyce Rouse

The gentle activism, contributions, and music of **Fred Rogers** will be celebrated in the **Magic Penny Award Ceremony** on Saturday, October 10, with special guest **David Newell**, "Mr. McFeely" from *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*. Our closing circle will wrap up with songs from **Cathy Fink and Marcy Marxer**[18]**, Lea Morris**[19]**, Aaron Nigel Smith**[20]**, Rodney Whittenberg**[21]**,** and others, and will provide a look ahead to **Together Tomorrow,** next year's **CMN Conference October 8–10, 2021 in Rosemont, Illinois.**

Fred Rogers

Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer

Lea Morris

Aaron Nigel Smith

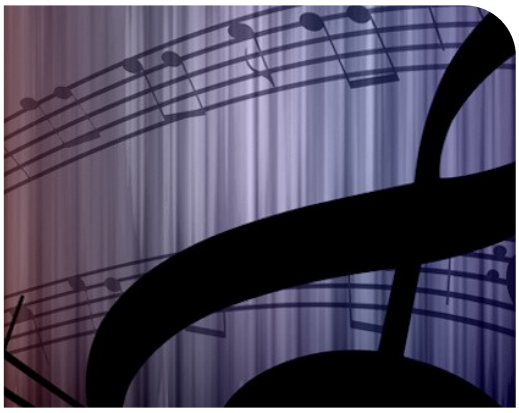
Rodney Whittenberg

---

1. https://babagotbars.bandcamp.com
2. https://moockmusic.com
3. https://sharonkatz.com
4. https://www.theuncledevinshow.com
5. https://www.ymbarnwell.com
6. https://www.wendyanddb.com
7. https://www.icansouthsudan.com
8. https://www.marshaandthepositrons.com
9. https://alphabetrockers.com
10. http://saulpaul.com
11. https://www.theuncledevinshow.com
12. https://www.richardjohnmclaughlin.com
13. http://earthmama.org
14. https://rockonmusicschool.com
15. http://joaniecalem.com
16. http://www.kathybyers.com
17. https://www.sallyrogers.com
18. https://www.cathymarcy.com
19. https://www.thisislea.com
20. https://www.aaronnigelsmith.com
21. https://www.melodyvisionrecording.com/5-east-end

About PIO!

Pass It On! publishes thoughtful, informative articles on children's music, empowering those who teach, write, perform, share, and produce it to strengthen their craft and their advocacy. All articles are open to the public, providing CMN members and the wider community with news about exciting programs, music history, business tips, and in-depth interviews with music legends. Our songs for children —serious and silly, traditional and brand new, for all ages and from all over the world—are meant to be learned and shared.



CMN members receive exclusive access to songs and to all issues of *Pass It On!* Join Now[1]

Staff

PIO! Editor

Ginger Lazarus
ginger.lazarus@gmail.com[2]

Copy Editor

Heather Taylor
blueheronimagesandwords@gmail.com[3]

Design

Kim Arden / Graphic Alchemy
kim@graphicalchemy.com[4]

Technical

Carl Foote / Soliv Design
cfoote@solivdesign.com[5]

Volunteer Staff

Songs Editor

Val Smalkin
val@sillygooseandval.com[6]

Content Advisor

Bridget Finucane
gardengoddess1@comcast.net[7]

How to Submit Something to *Pass It On!*

Articles

Pass It On! always needs stories from members about what they're doing and how they're doing it. If you are a CMN member, you are invited to share your story. After all, that's the whole point of CMN.

Songs

Most of the songs published in *Pass It On!* are contributed by CMN members, and we welcome songs written by people from various parts of the continent or the world. Please share your works with us.

Interested? Read our guidelines for submission[8] to *Pass It On!*

Copyright

PASS IT ON!®
is the journal of
THE CHILDREN'S MUSIC NETWORK®
A Not-for-Profit 501(c)(3) Corporation
© 2020 The Children's Music Network
All Rights Reserved

1. https://childrensmusic.org/join
2. mailto:ginger.lazarus@gmail.com
3. mailto:blueheronimagesandwords@gmail.com
4. mailto:kim@graphicalchemy.com
5. mailto:cfoote@solivdesign.com
6. mailto:val@sillygooseandval.com
7. mailto:gardengoddess1@comcast.net
8. https://childrensmusic.org/pass-it-on/guidelines